

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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COMICEDEFOR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, IC, NATO

SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION ISSUE: VIEWS

REFERENCE: REYKJAVIK 0221

1. FOUR RECENT INCIDENTS SHOW EXTENT TO WHICH ICELANDIC
POLITICAL PARTIES ARE INTERNALLY DIVIDED ON DEFENSE ISSUE:

(A) PRESS REPORTS FEB 14 THAT AT MEETING FEB 7 OF
MILITARY STATIONS OPPONENTS (PRIMARILY A COMMUNIST FRONT
ORGANIZATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE), CHAIRMAN OF PEOPLE'S
ALLIANCE RAGNAR ARNALDS ATTEMPTED TO MAKE SPEECH EXPLAIN-
ING PARTY'S POLICY ON DEFENSE AFFAIRS. HIS EXPLANATION WAS
MET WITH SUCH LAUGHTER AND RIDUCULE THAT HE WAS FORCED
TO STOP SPEAKING AND HE LEFT MEETING IN ANGER. MEETING
THEN PASSED RESOLUTION CRITICIZING PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE
FOR HAVING YIELDED TO "THOSE VOICES FAVORING A CONTINUED
POSITION FOR NATO MILITARY STATIONS IN THIS COUNTRY."

(B) AS REPORTED IN REFTTEL, YOUNG PROGRESSIVES MOUNTED VEILED
ATTACK ON PROGRESSIVE PARTY LEADERSHIP ON FEB 15 CHARGING "WILL
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OF THE MAJORITY OF THE PARTY IS VEING VIOLATED" BY WORKING TO-

WARDS A REDUCTION RATHER THAN REMOVAL OF THE IDF.

(C) AT SAME TIME, FEDERATION OF YOUNG SOCIAL DEMOCRATS PUBLISHED STATEMENT CLAIMING SDP LEADERSHIP'S VIEWS DID NOT REPRESENT THOSE OF RANK AND FILE OF PARTY AND THAT SDP SHOULD BE COOPERATING WITH THOSE ELEMENTS WORKING FOR REMOVAL OF IDF.

(D) EVEN HANNIBAL VALDIMARSSON'S LIBERAL LEFTISTS HAVE SHOWN SIGNS OF DISSIDENCE. SHORTLY AFTER HANNIBAL SPOKE AT NORWEGIAN-ICELANDIC SEMINAR FEB 3 AND SAID "IT IS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE DEFENSE OF ICELAND TO HAVE A SURVEILLANCE AND DEFENSE BASE IN THE COUNTRY," REYKJAVIK BRANCH OF HIS PARTY REPUDIATED HIM AND DEMANDED TERMINATION OF DEFENSE AGREEMENT.

2. COMMENT: NONE OF THESE EVENTS ARE SIGNIFICANT IN THEMSELVES BUT THEY DO ILLUSTRATE EXTENT TO WHICH GENERATION GAP EXISTS IN ICELANDIC POLITICS ON DEFENSE ISSUE. ALTHOUGH SPONSORS OF "DEFENDED COUNTRY" PETITION NOW CLAIM OVER 46,000 SIGNATURES (WITH CAMPAIGN CLOSING FEB 21), IT IS DOUBTFUL IF MORE THAN A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF SIGNERS WOULD BE UNDER 30.

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